

60,130-2044; 04arm0171

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

In paragraph 6, please make the following amendment:

[0006] The present invention provides a preload shock absorber assembly including a shock absorber having a hydraulic cylinder. The cylinder includes a rod slideably supported by a cylinder head having a seal at one end of the hydraulic cylinder. A preload air chamber is arranged radially outwardly of the rod seal, and in one embodiment shown, radially outwardly of an outer wall of the hydraulic cylinder, to provide a first spring having a first spring rate. The pressurized preload air chamber is separated from the rod seal to prevent loss of pressurized air past the rod seal from the preload air chamber to the hydraulic cylinder. The pressurized air chamber uses a movable separator that seals the air chamber and isolates the air chamber from the outside environment. A second spring is supported by a seat secured to the hydraulic cylinder outer wall and is arranged between the seat and the separator. A third spring is arranged within the air chamber to supplement the spring rate provided by the pressurized air chamber.

In paragraph 20, please make the following amendments:

[0020] Since the spring rate provided by the preload air chamber 31 is arranged in series to the second spring 50, the separator 38 travels less than the prior art during a shock stroke reducing wear of the seals 44. The separator 38 travel moves a reduced amount proportional to prior art systems that can be represented by the following equation relationship:

$$\frac{k_2}{k_1 + k_2 + k_3} \quad \text{Equation-2.}$$